

HAEMOPHILUS INFLUENZAE, Invasive Disease

The organism *Haemophilus influenzae* type b causes meningitis, epiglottitis, septic arthritis, and pneumonia, as well as localized infections such as conjunctivitis, sinusitis, otitis media and bronchitis in infants and young children. In adults, the organism often presents as pneumonia. Droplets from the nose and throat spread the organism during the infectious period. A vaccine which protects against invasive disease caused by *H. influenzae* type b (Hib) is recommended for all infants beginning at two months of age. The vaccine has been available since 1985 generating a substantial decrease in rates.

Laboratory Criteria for Diagnosis:

- Isolation of *Haemophilus influenzae* from a normally sterile site (blood, CSF, or less commonly, joint, pleural, or pericardial fluid).

Case Classification

Confirmed: A clinically compatible case that is laboratory confirmed.

Probable: A clinically compatible case with detection of *H. influenzae* type b antigen in the CSF.

Comment--Positive antigen test results from urine or serum samples are unreliable for diagnosis of *H. influenzae* disease.

Epidemiology

Kentucky 2002	Rate per 100,000	U.S. Rate (2001) per 100,000
Cases 10	0.2	0.5

Three of the cases were under 1 year of age and there were 2 deaths in persons over 65 years of age.

***H. influenzae* Incidence, Kentucky 1993-2002**

